

HANDEL

MESSIAH

Wells Cathedral

Saturday 7 December 2019

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society

Elizabeth Atherton soprano

Tim Morgan countertenor

Peter Auty tenor

Ben McAteer bass

Music for Awhile Orchestra

on period instruments; leader Jean Paterson

Jeremy Cole conductor

PROGRAMME

www.wcos.org.uk

in 2020

Saturday 28th March 7.00pm

Haydn *Insanae et vanae curae*
Haydn *Symphony no 104 [The London]*
Mozart *Requiem*

Alexandra Oomens soprano
Helen Charlston alto
James Oxley tenor
Grant Doyle bass
English Symphony Orchestra
Jeremy Cole conductor

COME AND SING

Saturday 2nd May 10am-5pm

Directed by John Rutter

All singers are invited to study, rehearse, and perform with this inspiring musician in Wells Cathedral

Saturday 14th November 7.00pm

Mozart *Solemn Vespers K339*
Beethoven *Mass in C*

English Chamber Orchestra
Jeremy Cole conductor

We strongly advise that bookings be made online at:- wcoss.org.uk

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Messiah (1741)

A Sacred Oratorio, words by Charles Jennens

Elizabeth Atherton soprano

Tim Morgan countertenor

Peter Auty tenor

Ben McAteer bass

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society

Music for Awhile Orchestra

(on period instruments)

Jean Paterson leader

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We are grateful to Battens Charitable Trust for its support of this performance.

The New Novello Choral Edition (Shaw) is used in this performance

Printed music supplied by Somerset Libraries, Arts & Information

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society is affiliated to Making Music.

Programme by Neill Bonham





This is 260 years since Handel died in 1759. George Frideric had been born in Saxony in Germany in 1685 but from 1712 had lived solely in England. He was patronised by King George I and then George II and enjoyed enormous critical and financial success, particularly as a composer of numerous Italian operas. Unfortunately, by 1741 his fortunes had changed, with his operas being regarded by many as scurrilous and the Covent Garden Theatre, which he ran, a 'den of rascals'. He was close to ruin and the debtors' prison.

Out of the blue an invitation came from the Duke of Devonshire for him to visit Dublin and provide a series of benefit concerts in this fashionable thriving city "For the relief of the prisoners in the several gaols, and for the support of Mercer's Hospital in Stephen Street, and of the Charitable Infirmary on the Inn's Quay". At the same time another letter arrived from Charles Jennens, literary scholar (and editor of Shakespeare's

plays) who had previously written libretti for some of Handel's oratorios. The work foreseen by Jennens was of three parts, taking in the entire sweep of the traditions and beliefs of the Christian faith from the Old and New Testament texts:

Part One — Prophecy of Salvation,
the birth of Christ Jesus

Part Two — Crucifixion and Death

Part Three — Resurrection and the
promise of eternal life for believers.

Handel was a man of deep faith and he immediately started using the texts for his new sacred opera. Beginning work on 22 August, he had completed Part I in outline by 28 August, Part II by 6 September and Part III by 12 September—followed by two days of "filling up" to produce the finished work on 14 September. Later he was convinced that he had received divine inspiration and assistance in the composition of *Messiah*.

In Dublin his six charity concerts from November to February raised £400 for three charities and, as a direct result, 142 men were released from debtors prison. *Messiah* was then premiered at two performances in Dublin in April 1742. Handel had sought and was given permission from St Patrick's and Christ Church cathedrals to use their choirs for this occasion. These forces amounted to 16 men and 16 boy choristers. The three female soloists also had to help with the choruses. The 700 people attending each performance were squeezed into the hall (minus hoops and swords) and it was an outstanding success.

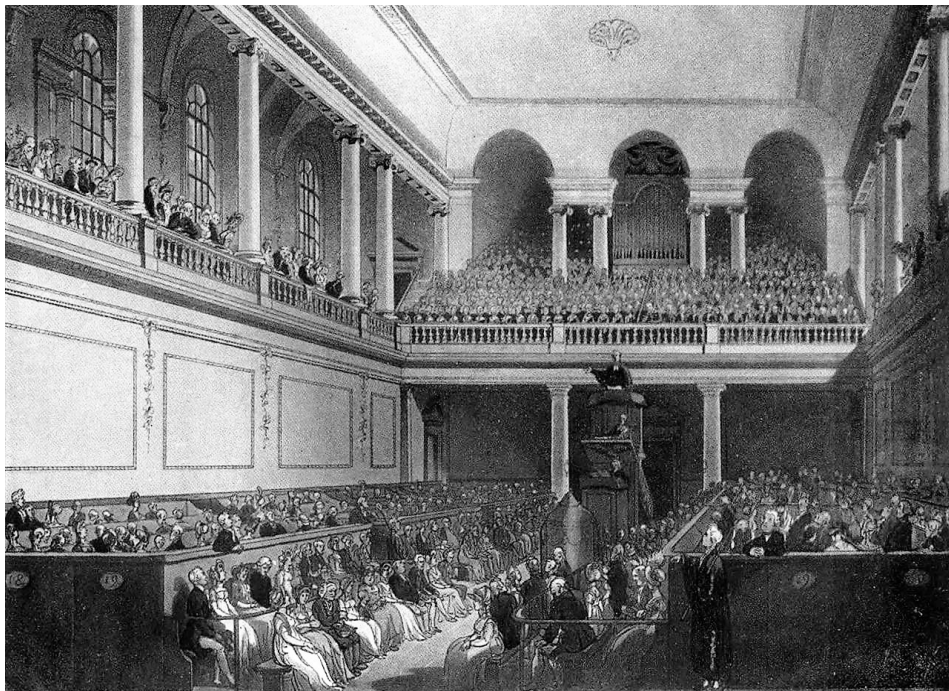
Back in London, although *Messiah* eventually became Britain's best-loved choral work, it had a sticky beginning. For its first week of performances the following year Handel had rented the Covent Garden Theatre. However, this venue was considered too disreputable and sacrile-

gious and an inappropriate place to perform the sacred story of the Messiah. The Earl of Shaftesbury noted in his memoirs that, “partly from the scruples some person had entertained against carrying on such a performance in a Play House, and partly for not entering into the genius of the composition, *Messiah* was but indifferently relish’d”. Consequently, it was left on the shelf for several years.

Also In 1742, in Bloomsbury, the foundation stone had been laid for the Foundling Hospital, a major new public building built by philanthropist Thomas Coram; he had been granted a royal charter to establish a new charity to care for abandoned babies. One of its founding governors was William Hogarth who persuaded other leading artists, Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough to

donate works to the charity. There were then no public art galleries and by effectively creating at the Hospital the UK's first public art gallery, Hogarth gave the public a reason to visit it. The hospital thus became one of London’s most fashionable charities.

Handel recognised the potential of the Hospital’s Chapel as a performance venue and noted that his royal patron had provided half of the funds to build it. In May 1749 he offered to conduct a benefit concert there. It included the first performance of his “specially written” *Foundling Hospital Anthem*. This opened with text from Psalm 41 – “Blessed are they that consider the poor and needy”, and ended with the *Hallelujah Chorus*, taken from his *Messiah* – a work that few of his London audience would have known.

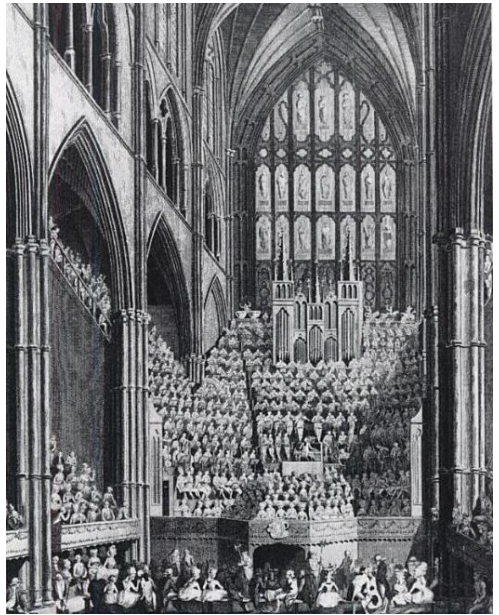


The Foundling Hospital Chapel, 1749

Although the Chapel was not finished, and had no glass in its windows, the performance was a huge musical and financial success attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales. This may be the occasion upon which royalty set the pattern by standing during the *Hallelujah Chorus*. Soon afterwards Handel gave an organ to the new Chapel and the following year he returned to conduct a second benefit concert—this time he chose *Messiah*. It was so oversubscribed that Handel had to repeat it two weeks later. In gratitude, the hospital made Handel a governor.

For the following 25 years *Messiah* was performed each year in the Foundling Hospital Chapel, for the benefit of the charity, with Handel conducting or attended every performance until his death in 1759. These concerts helped to secure the Oratorio's place in the nation's affections—and raised the huge sum of £7,000 for the charity. As a final act of generosity, Handel left in his will a copy of the *Messiah* score to the Foundling Hospital, enabling the charity to continue staging the benefit concerts. The score and orchestral parts were delivered to the hospital three weeks after Handel's death and are still in the Foundling Museum; the Hospital continues to benefit to this day from performances of the *Messiah*. Charles Burney, 18th century music historian, remarked that Handel's *Messiah* “fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and fostered the orphan.”

The original manuscript in the British Library's music collection is scored for 2 trumpets, timpani, 2 oboes, 2 violins, viola, and basso continuo (cello, double bass, and harpsichord). The 1754 performance at the hospital is the first for which full details of the orchestral and vocal forces survive. The orchestra then included fifteen violins, five violas, three



Westminster Abbey 1784
Handel Commemoration

cellos, two double-basses, four bassoons, four oboes, two trumpets, two horns and drums. In the chorus of nineteen were six trebles from the Chapel Royal; the remainder, all men, were altos, tenors and basses. The five soloists were required to assist the chorus. By this time Handel was severely afflicted by the onset of blindness, however in 1757 was able to resume some of his duties; the final performance of *Messiah* at which Handel was present was at Covent Garden on 6 April 1759, eight days before his death.

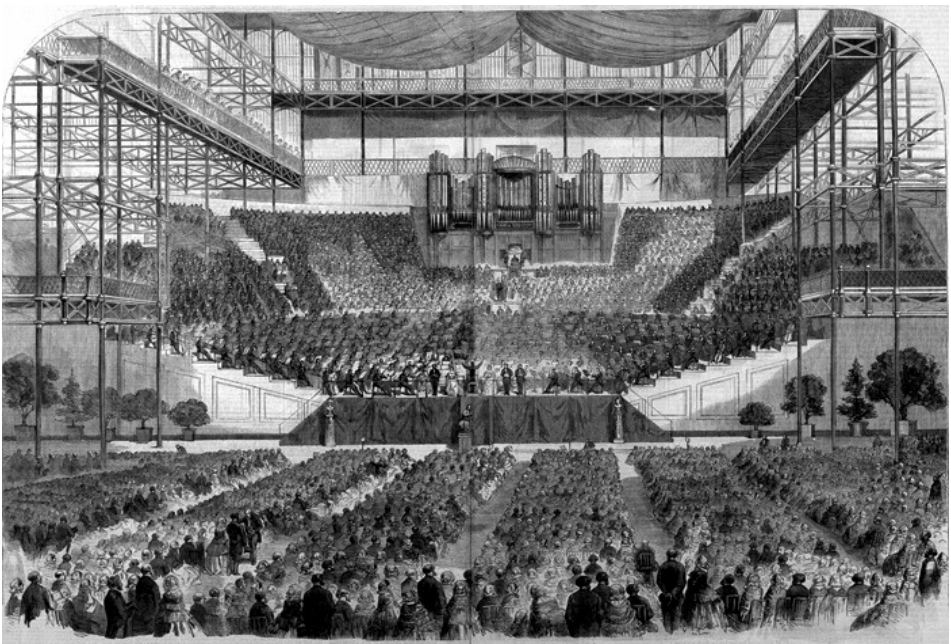
A fashion for large-scale performances began in 1784 at one of a series of commemorative concerts of Handel's music given in Westminster Abbey under the patronage of King George III. A plaque on the Abbey wall records that “The Band consisting of DXXV [525] vocal & instrumental performers was conducted by Joah Bates Esqr.” In a 1955 article, Sir

Malcolm Sargent, himself a proponent of large-scale performances, wrote, "Mr Bates ... had known Handel well and respected his wishes. The orchestra employed was two hundred and fifty strong, including twelve horns, twelve trumpets, six trombones and three pairs of timpani (some made especially large)." In 1787 further performances were given at the Abbey with advertisements promising "The Band will consist of Eight Hundred Performers".

In continental Europe, performances of *Messiah* were departing from Handel's score with drastic re-orchestration to suit contemporary tastes. A Berlin Cathedral performance in 1788 had updated scoring with a choir of 259 and an orchestra of 87 strings, 10 bassoons, 11 oboes, 8 flutes, 8 horns, 4 clarinets, 4 trombones, 7 trumpets, timpani, harpsichord and organ. Contrasting with this is the commission that was received

in 1789 by Mozart to re-orchestrate *Messiah* for a small-scale performance, without organ continuo but with added parts for flutes, clarinets, trombones and horns. For it he re-composed some passages and re-arranged others. The performance took place on 6 March 1789 in the rooms of Count Johann Esterházy, with four soloists and a choir of 12. Even Mozart, however, confessed himself to be humble in the face of Handel's genius. He insisted that any alterations to Handel's score should not be interpreted as an effort to improve the music. "Handel knows better than any of us what will make an effect," Mozart said. "When he chooses, he strikes like a thunderbolt."

Once, after being congratulated on providing audiences with such fine entertainment, Handel replied, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them. For I wished to make them better."



A choir of 3,000+ at The Crystal Palace Handel Festival c.1880

Handel paints the texts so vividly and gloriously that it seems impossible not to be profoundly moved by every aria and chorus. Everyone knows the *Hallelujah Chorus* but it is the words which begin Part III, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth', which were inscribed on Handel's tomb in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey when he died in 1759.

Written in the optimistic, bright and certain key of E major, the opening two notes (dominant rising to tonic) sum up the entire piece; without any shadow of a doubt, with no possibility for confusion, Handel says, 'I believe'.

3,000 mourners were at Handel's funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Part One

1. **Sinfonia** (Overture)

2. **Recitative Tenor**

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (*Isaiah 40: 1-3*)

3. **Air Tenor**

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain. (*Isaiah 40: 4*)

4. **Chorus**

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (*Isaiah 40: 5*)

5. **Recitative Bass**

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.

And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

(*Haggai 2: 6-7*) (*Malachi 3: 1*)

6. **Air Countertenor**

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. (*Malachi 3: 2*)

7. **Chorus**

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

(*Malachi 3: 3*)

8. **Recitative Countertenor**

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us.

(*Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23*)

9. **Air and Chorus Countertenor**

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain.

O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. *(Isaiah 40: 9)*

10. Recitative Bass

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising *(Isaiah 60: 2-3)*

11. Air Bass

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. *(Isaiah 9: 2)*

12. Chorus

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. *(Isaiah 9: 6)*

13. Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

14a Recitative Soprano

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. *(Luke 2: 8)*

14b Recitative Soprano

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. *(Luke 2: 9)*

15. Recitative Soprano

And the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." *(Luke 2: 10-11)*

16. Recitative Soprano

And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: *(Luke 2: 13)*

17. Chorus

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men." *(Luke 2: 14)*

18. Air Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. *(Zechariah 9: 9-10)*

19. Recitative Countertenor

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. *(Isaiah 35: 5-6)*

20. Air Countertenor and Soprano

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. *(Isaiah 40: 11)*

Come unto Him, all ye that labour, come unto Him that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. *(Matthew 11: 28-29)*

21. Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light. *(Matthew 11: 30)*

Interval - 20 minutes

Wine and soft drinks are available in the Transepts

Part Two

22. Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

(John 1: 29)

23. Air Countertenor

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off His hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting.

(Isaiah 53: 3, 6)

24. Chorus

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

(Isaiah 53: 4-5)

25. Chorus

And with His stripes we are healed.

(Isaiah 53: 5)

26. Chorus

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.

And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

(Isaiah 53: 6)

27. Recitative Tenor

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

(Psalm 22: 7)

28. Chorus

“He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.”

(Psalm 22: 8)

29. Recitative Tenor

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort him.

(Psalm 69: 20)

30. Air Tenor

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

(Lamentations 1: 12)

31. Recitative Tenor

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken.

(Isaiah 53: 8)

32. Air Tenor

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.

(Psalm 16: 10)

36. Air Countertenor

Thou art gone up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even from Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

(Psalm 68: 18)

38. Air Soprano

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

(Isaiah 52: 7; Romans 10: 15)

40. Air Bass

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed.

(Psalm 2: 1-2)

41. Chorus

Let us break their bonds asunder,
and cast away their yokes from us.
(Psalm 2: 3)

42. Recitative Tenor

He that dwelleth in Heav'n shall
laugh them to scorn;
The Lord shall have them in derision.
(Psalm 2: 4)

43. Air Tenor

Thou shalt break them with a rod of
iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces
like a potter's vessel. *(Psalm 2: 9)*

44. Chorus

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!
(Revelation 11: 15; 19: 6 & 16)

Part Three

45. Air Soprano

I know that my Redeemer liveth,
and that He shall stand at the latter
day upon the earth. And though
worms destroy this body, yet in my
flesh shall I see God. *(Job 19: 25-26)*
For now is Christ risen from the
dead, the first fruits of them that
sleep. *(I Corinthians 15: 20)*

46. Chorus

Since by man came death, by man
came also the resurrection of the
dead. For as in Adam all die, even so
in Christ shall all be made alive.
(I Corinthians 15: 21-22)

47. Recitative Bass

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall
not all sleep, but we shall all be
changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.
(I Corinthians 15: 51-52)

48. Air Bass

The trumpet shall sound, and the
dead shall be raised incorruptible,
and we shall be changed.
(I Corinthians 15: 52-53)

52. Air Soprano

If God be for us, who can be
against us? Who shall lay anything
to the charge of God's elect?
It is God that justifieth, who is he
that condemneth? It is Christ that
died, yea rather, that is risen again,
who is at the right hand of God,
who makes intercession for us.
(Romans 8: 31, 33-34)

53. Chorus

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,
and hath redeemed us to God
by His blood, to receive power,
and riches, and wisdom,
and strength, and honour,
and glory, and blessing.
Blessing and honour,
glory and power,
be unto Him that sitteth
upon the throne,
and unto the Lamb,
for ever and ever.
Amen. *(Revelation 5: 12-14)*



ELIZABETH ATHERTON

Soprano

Equally at home on the opera stage or concert platform, Elizabeth's versatility as both musician and actress means that her repertoire encompasses Monteverdi, Handel and Mozart through to Verdi, Bizet and Britten, and she had the roles of **Eurydice** in Sir Harrison Birtwistle's operas *The Corridor* and **Medea** *The Cure* created for her to considerable critical acclaim.

Winner of several major prizes, Elizabeth's debut was as **Helena** *Midsummer Night's Dream* (English Touring Opera). She subsequently joined Welsh National Opera, singing roles including Mozart's **Countess**, **Donna Elvira** and **Pamina** and Bizet's **Micaela**, and has since become a regular performer at Opera North, with roles including Mozart's **Fiordiligi** and Britten's **Governess**.

Elizabeth has worked with such eminent conductors as Sir Richard Hickox, Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Sir Neville Martiner, Pierre Boulez, Harry Christophers and Thierry Fischer. Concert highlights include performances with BBC Symphony, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, LSO, Philharmonia, RLPO, The Hallé, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, Orchestre de Paris, Hong Kong Philharmonic and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Current and future engagements include the title role in the world première of Tom Coult's new opera *Violet* for Music Theatre Wales (Aldeburgh Festival, Linbury Studio ROH), Barber's *Knoxville* (RLPO/Spano, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall), Beethoven's *9th Symphony* (BBCS/Farnes, Gorecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* (London Sinfonietta/Atherton, RFH), Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* (Prague Symphony Orchestra/van Steen, Smetana Hall, Prague) and her role debuts as Wellgunde *Rheingold* and Third Norn *Götterdämmerung* (LPO/Jurowski, RFH).

TIM MORGAN

countertenor

Tim Morgan is in his final year of the postgraduate course at the Royal College of Music in London where he studies with Ben Johnson and Caroline Dowlle. A Samling Artist, Tim was a finalist in the 2019 Kathleen Ferrier Awards.

Recent opera highlights include **Cupid** in Blow's *Venus and Adonis* with the Dunein Consort, **Ferdinand** *The Enchanted Island* with British Youth Opera, **Oberon** Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Royal College of Music International Opera school, **Gerardo** *Faramondo* at the London Handel



Festival, and a European tour of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* with The Monteverdi Choir.

Highlights on the concert platform include a staged performance of Bach's *St John Passion* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Sir Simon Rattle and directed by Peter Sellars, **Arsace** in Handel's *Berenice* with La Nuova Musica and the London Handel Festival, **High Priest Esther** at the London Handel Festival with the London Handel Players, Monteverdi's *Vespro della beata vergine* with The Monteverdi Choir, numerous performances with the Hanover Band, and a duet recital with Michael Chance.

Recent and future engagements include **Oberon** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Nevill Holt Opera, the title role in *Giulio Cesare* for English Touring Opera, Purcell's *The Indian Queen* with Emanuelle Haïm and Le Concert D'Astrée at Opéra de Lille, Pergo-

lesi's *Stabat Mater* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Handel's *Messiah* with The Hanover Band, a recital of Vivaldi arias with Norwich Baroque Orchestra, Purcell's *King Arthur* with Vox Luminis, and the countertenor solos in 'Gabriel' at London's Barbican alongside Alison Balsom, Harry Bicket and The English Concert.

PETER AUTY

tenor

Peter Auty is established as one of Britain's leading tenors. Following his professional debut at Opera North, Peter went on to become a company principal at the Royal Opera House, where he has since returned as guest singing the roles of **Malcolm Macbeth** and **Arturo Lucia di Lammermoor**.

Elsewhere in the UK Peter Auty has sung **Cavaradossi/Tosca** for Grange Park



Opera, **Count Vaudémont** / *Iolanta* **Alvaro** / *La Forza del Destino*, **Radames** / *Aida*, **Turiddu** and **Canio** / *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*, **Maurizio** / *Adriana Lecouvreur* and **Lensky** / *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Holland Park, **Macduff** / *Macbeth*, **Nemorino** / *L'elisir d'amore* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, **Don José** / *Carmen* and **Rodolfo** / *La Bohème* for Glyndebourne on Tour, **Italian Tenor** / *Der Rosenkavalier*, **Duke** / *Rigoletto*, **Rodolfo** / *La Bohème*, **Dick Johnson** / *The Girl of the Golden West*, **Turiddu** and **Gabriele** / *Simon Boccanegra* for English National Opera, **Fritz Kobus** / *Amico Fritz*, **Alfredo** / *La Traviata*, **Don José**, title role in **Faust** for Opera North, **Rodolfo** and **Don José** for Scottish Opera, **Canio** and **Turiddu** for Welsh National Opera.

On the concert platform Peter Auty has worked with the London Symphony Orchestra (Sir Colin Davis), the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (Sir Mark Elder), and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Neeme Järvi, Vladimir Jurowsky). Appearances abroad have included concerts with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy, the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra under Edward Gardner, and the Royal Flemish Philharmonic under Edo de Waart.

Recent and future highlights include **Des Grieux** *Manon Lescaut* for Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, a return to Opera Holland Park to perform **Roberto, Johnson** for the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the title role in Puccini's **Edgar** for Scottish Opera and at Konzerthaus Berlin, **Don José** at Welsh National Opera, and **Turiddu** *Cavalleria Rusticana* and **Radu** *Zingari* for Scottish Opera.

BEN MCATEER

bass

Northern Irish **Ben McAteer** trained at the National Opera Studio, London and on the Guildhall School of Music & Drama opera course. Notable concert performances include the world première of Turnage's *At Sixes & Sevens* with the LSO, *Carmina Burana* at the Barbican, and performances of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and Copland's *Old American Songs* with the Ulster Orchestra.

Recent and future operatic highlights include **Eisenstein** *Die Fledermaus* and **Marullo** *Rigoletto* for Northern Ireland Opera, **Marcello** *La bohème* for Lyric Opera Ireland, a concert performance of *Die tote Stadt* as **Fritz/Pierrot** with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, **Earl of Mountararat** in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Iolanthe* at English National Opera, **Count Almaviva** in Irish



National Opera's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and **Father Hansel and Gretel**, which he also recently performed at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, **Pangloss & Voltaire** in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* for West Green Opera and the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra, and **Grand Inquisitor The Gondoliers** for Scottish Opera. While in residence there, Ben created the role of **James** in the world première of *The Devil Inside*, for which he won *Outstanding Performance in an Opera* at the My Theatre Awards in Toronto. He also sang the **title role** in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and toured as **Guglielmo** in *Così fan tutte* and **Pish-Tush** in *The Mikado*.

JEREMY COLE

Conductor

Jeremy Cole was organ scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied the organ with Colin Walsh, Stephen Farr, and David Briggs, and conducting with Stephen Layton. He was closely involved in the world-famous choir's routine of services and concerts, and features on several of their recordings on the Hyperion label.

Whilst in London, Jeremy held positions at St Paul's Knightsbridge and St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, where he was the principal organist, playing for all regular and special services, as well as concerts and special events, in one of London's busiest churches and concert venues. He combined this role with a busy freelance career as an organist, conductor and piano accompanist. While in London he was assistant conductor and accompanist of the Holst Singers, and worked regularly with leading choirs such as Polyphony and the City of London Choir. He is in demand and as a repeteur for solo singers and instrumentalists and as a continuo player.

Jeremy is artistic director of Illuminare Choir, a professional ensemble which he founded in 2012 and which has performed to great acclaim in venues across London. The choir has championed new music and recently commissioned and performed the premiere of *The Temptations of Christ*, a substantial contemporary cantata written by Barnaby Martin for two choirs, soloists, tubular bells and organ.

Jeremy is currently Acting Organist and Master of the Choristers at Wells Cathedral, having been Assistant Organist since 2017. He is responsible for the Cathedral Choir's busy schedule of nine sung services each week, as well as its broadcasts, concerts and tours.

Jeremy is delighted to be taking on the role of Musical Director of the Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society for the 2019/20 season.



MUSIC FOR AWHILE ORCHESTRA

Artistic Director:
Maggie Faultless

Since its first performance in 1996, Music for Awhile has continued to inspire audiences and performers with concerts in a variety of venues, and at its own Summer Festival in the magical setting of All Saints, Alton Priors. Musicians from Europe's most acclaimed ensembles come together to perform a wide range of repertoire spanning over two centuries. Music for Awhile specialises in performing English opera from Purcell's time, and thanks to sponsorship from the Cecil King Memorial Foundation it also features the music of J. S. Bach. The ensemble regularly expands to form a larger orchestra enabling it to perform major choral works in venues such as Westminster Abbey and Gloucester, Hereford and Bristol Cathedrals. It also has its own chamber music series, held in smaller venues appropriate to the repertoire. Music for Awhile has established contacts with schools and groups of young musicians in order to attract children to rehearsals and concerts, and provides important access to live music for the local rural community.

Violin 1

Jean Paterson (leader)
Dominika Feyer Louise Ayrton
Magda Loth-Hill Simon Kodurand
Olivia Jarvis

Violin 2

Anna Curzon Ellen Bundy
Alice Earll Alice Poppleton
Hatty Haynes

Viola

Jan Schlapp Katie Heller
Hannah Gardiner Monica Cragg

Cellos

Cathy Rimer Hugh Mackay
Camilla Morse-Glover

Bass

Jan Spencer Zaynab Martin

Oboe

Bethan White Amy Roberts

Bassoon

Zoe Shevlin

Trumpet

Paul Bosworth Peter Mankarious

Timpani

Jude Carlton

Harpichord

Satoko Doi-Luck

Organ

Benedict Williams

The logo features a large, stylized, calligraphic letter 'O' on the left. To its right, the words 'WELLS CATHEDRAL' are written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the word 'ORATORIO' is written in a large, bold, serif font. Underneath 'ORATORIO', a thick horizontal line spans across the text, and the word 'SOCIETY' is written in a bold, sans-serif font below the line.

**WELLS CATHEDRAL
ORATORIO
SOCIETY**

Patron: John Rutter, CBE President: The Dean of Wells
Chairman: Marion Robinson Conductor: Jeremy Cole

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society (WCOS) is one of the Southwest's leading choral societies, being founded in 1896. It was originally the Wells Music Association but after the First World War it merged with the Street, Shepton Mallet and Wedmore Music Societies.

It performs the great choral works with some of the UK's finest soloists and professional orchestras in the glorious surroundings of Wells Cathedral.

Numbering around 160 voices, WCOS gives three concerts a year, under the direction of Jeremy Cole, acting Organist and Master of the Choristers at Wells Cathedral.

In recent years, the society has performed Bach's *St John Passion*, *B minor Mass*, and *Christmas Oratorio*; Brahms's *German Requiem*; Britten's *War Requiem* and *Saint Nicholas*; Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*; Fauré's *Requiem*; Handel's *Four Coronation Anthems*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Mozart's *Requiem* and *C Minor Mass*; Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Verdi's *Requiem*; and major works by Finzi, Lauridsen, Purcell, Rutter, and Vaughan Williams.

The Society also presents Handel's ever-popular *Messiah* each December.

WCOS hosts an annual *Come and Sing Day* each spring, to which any singers are welcome to learn and perform works from scratch, in just a few hours; next Spring we'll be singing under our patron, John Rutter, CBE.

Chorus rehearsals are on Monday evenings in the Cathedral from September to March and generally follow Wells Cathedral School's term times.

For further details about WCOS, including how to join, please visit:

www.wcos.org.uk

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Members

Soprano

Sarah Allen
Dora Almy
Ann Baker
Anna Bernard
Pam Booth
Helen Bowen ¶
Maureen Boylan
Kate Brown
Mary Burton
Denise Bush
Ruth Bush
Barbara Calverley
Felicity Chapman
Katherine Constable
Heather Forgham
Sandra Freeborn
Sue Gould
Jane Hancock
Susan Hanson
Sarah Hare
Chris Harris
Sally Harvey
Jenny Henderson
Dorothy Hunter
Lynne Jarman
Deborah Jenkins
Eleanor Jolley
Marion Jones
Carolyn Legg
Ruth Lickfold
Della Luetchford
Jennie Lunnon
Donna-Marie
Macpherson
Sarah May
Janice Merritt

Louise Palmer
Maureen Pickford
Pamela Pye ¶
Margaret Raynes
Marion Robinson ¶
Gill Round
Frances Rowe
Maggie St Quintin
Janet Saxon
Rebecca Shaw
Margaret Sutton
Pamela Tomlinson
Christine Tudor
Lynn Waldron
Ann Walton
Jan Weaver
Lucy Williams

Alto

Jenny Abraham
Christine Barker
Louise Burton
Rosemary Cooke
Penelope Cowman
Polly Corbishley
Sue Curragh
Gill Deamer
Sian Decamp
Joan Dovey
Robin Duys
Anne Easton
Kate Fielder
Wendy Gregory
Shelley Gudgin
Faith Guest
Elizabeth Hand
Jenny Harrow

Catherine Hay
Helen Hazlewood
Jane James
Jane Jarratt
Janet Johnson
Deborah Jonas
Elaine Kinsella
Jessica Leach
Alex Lemanski
Jennifer Mackenzie
Philippa Mains
Mary Massey
Della Menday ¶
Liz Metcalfe
Mary Newman
Margaret Rayfield
Cathy Rowe
Janet Rundle
Celia Smith
Sue Stoughton-
Harris ¶
Celia Townend
Sue Wells
Olivia Wilkinson
Kate Wilson
Chris Young

Tenor

Neill Bonham ¶
Simon Bruce
Ian Bynoe
Horatio Carr-Jones †
Ben Clay ¶
Richard Garstang
Peter Lawrence
Martin Lovell
Nigel Lloyd

Bernard North
Chris Ray
Sarah Villiers
Robin Walker ¶
Stacey Williams

Bass

David Abels
Simon Ayres
David Bevan †
Christopher Boddie
Michael Calverley
John Castree
Geoffrey Clarke
Michael Estall
Peter Farrell
Niall Garden
Adrian Grey
Michael Harris
Trevor Hazelgrove
Richard Henderson
Derek Hiller
Tony Iveson
Chris Jenkins ¶
Dennis Johnson
John King
Richard Lander
Michael Leach
Brian Marshall
Alan Rayfield
Colin Rendell
David Rosser
David Salmon
Duncan Shaw
William Truscott
Richard Walton
¶ Committee
† Choral Scholar

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Friends

Your continued support as a Friend of Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society is greatly appreciated and we look forward to seeing you at our concerts.

The Society gives three concerts each year which include an annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* in December. The other two concerts are in early November and in the Spring.

The main features of the Friends' scheme are:

- Priority booking in March 2019 of up to four prime Nave seats for each of the November and December concerts
- Priority booking in January 2020 of up to four prime Nave seats for the Spring concert in 2020
- Names of Friends acknowledged in concert programmes
- Annual Newsletter
- Invitation to a social event with the Choir and Conductor each year
- Annual subscription of £24 for the season which runs from April to February. Subscription renewal is in April 2019 alongside priority booking for the November and December concerts.

Please contact our Friends Secretary at: friends@wcos.org.uk

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Corporate Patrons

The Society is most grateful to its Corporate Patrons, **Chalmers HB, Chartered Accountants**, of Chamberlain Street, Wells, and **Battens Solicitors**, of Princes Street, Yeovil for their support of the Society under our Corporate Patrons scheme.

Companies willing to join this scheme will be assured of a warm welcome. For further information, please contact Marion Robinson at chair@wcos.org.uk

Wells Cathedral Oratorio

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